

SLCC Journal

SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB

June, 1987

Back Together
We're Friends Again!



World of Atari

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to the
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Reasons Why We're So Friendly...



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Now you're no longer limited to 'Atari Only' printers and MODEMS... the P:R:Connection is a flexible alternative to the Atari 850 interface. Suddenly hundreds of printers and MODEMS become compatible with your Atari, you can even share the same printer and MODEM with your ST or IBM PC.

The P:R:Connection plugs directly into the serial (disk drive) port of any 8 bit Atari and provides the user with a standard 'centronics' printer port and two RS-232 type serial ports. It also draws its energy from your computer which means one less cord fighting for an outlet while its compact size leaves your work space virtually clutter-free. The P:R:Connection's serial ports resemble those of the 850 interface, possessing the same signals and functions and using a fully compatible built in R: handler. Why not make your connection the right connection... with our Connection! **\$89.95** 6 ft. Standard MODEM Cables **\$14.95** 6 ft. Standard Printer Cables **\$14.95**

2. Printer Connection

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So, for you "adventurous" Atari owners who dare to explore the world of printers... this one's for you! **\$59.95**

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Perfection... that's how we describe our DOS and we're sure you'll agree when you put the SpartaDOS Construction Set to work. It supports everything from the 810 disk drive to hard disk drives, RAMDISKS with the RAMBO XL modified 800XL or 1200XL, the 130XE, the modified 320K XE plus the AXLON 128 board for the 800! And there's more...

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We've got the time if you've got the Atari. In fact, the R-Time 8 will even provide you with continuous and automatic date information as well! Its unique piggyback cartridge sports a clock board and a three to five year battery back up. A top extension port welcomes the use of additional cartridges since this handy device of ours requires no cartridge area memory of its own. What's more, the R-Time 8 works with all DOS types and plugs into any slot on your Atari computer.

Put our SpartaDOS to work with the R-Time 8 and just like magic... each file you create or rewrite is now instantly tagged with time and date information. We're sure that the R-Time 8 will add a new and exciting dimension to your Atari, one that you'll rely on time after time! **\$69.95**

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You must supply the eight 256K DRAMS (available from ICD for \$32.00) and the DOS of your choice. The RAMBO XL provides a low cost answer to high performance memory enhancement. **\$39.95**

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COMPUTER CLUB**
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SLCC JOURNAL

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THE WORLD OF ATARI

(as the EXPO turns..... better) by Jim Moran

As it always seems to happen, things work out. A little bit of cooperation by ATARI and the SLCC and the EXPO is on again. Last minute moves by all concerned open the door to what could be a really great show. This one will be the first of a new type EXPO, a regional one. Up to now, the EXPO's have been set up for a fairly small area and the problems that ATARI has run into trying to help set up a show every couple of weeks have been nothing short of monumental. The number of shows will probably drop but the shows will be bigger and more interesting for all. By spacing out the shows there will be more time to set up more interesting displays and more vendors will be able to attend as they won't have to stretch their costs quite so far. The shows will have a different name which is the title of this piece, THE WORLD OF ATARI. With this change of format and the greater involvement of ATARI, there will be more of everything from ATARI, more of the latest products and much more publicity - which should be beneficial to all the user groups in exposure to potential new members. The vendors are now being solicited and with a bit of luck, this should really be a good show for both 8 Bit and ST owners. Yes, ATARI assures us the 8-Bits will be well represented. The theme of this show will be applications, so there will be something for everybody. The show will be at the new Santa Clara convention center on June 19th and 20th, from 10AM till 6PM both days. The SLCC, of course, will need volunteers to man the club booth as well as help man some of the vendors booths. This last is a new aspect and should add some interest for some show workers. Any volunteers should contact President Barton as soon as possible. Attend the club general meeting on the second and hear ATARI give us some more details.

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16 BIT STU'S PLACE 415-782-4402

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FULL PAGE \$50. QUARTER PAGE \$18
HALF PAGE \$30. BUSINESS CARD \$5

continued from May Journal ... reprinted from A-BUG, via Keeping Pace.

Turbo Basic - Public Domain Speedster

In case you have just landed from Mars, or just plain have not heard yet, Turbo Basic is the exciting new public domain Basic interpreter from Germany. It works on the XL/XE series of Atari computers and is almost too good to be true. It should be a definite must have for all XL and XE owners!

Turbo Basic, in addition to offering 42 more commands and 22 more functions than Atari Basic, gives the user 1603 more bytes of program space by "hiding" part of itself under the operating system ROM. It also runs 3 times faster than Atari Basic, includes most Dos commands, has advanced graphics and programming functions, and is insensitive to lower case or inverse characters for most commands.

Review by: Mark Dulcey

Features

Turbo Basic XL is a public domain Basic interpreter from Germany. It was written by Frank Ostrowski for the German magazine, *Happy Computer*.

The command summary (printed last month ..ed.) lists only the new commands of Turbo Basic. It also supports all the commands of Atari Basic, and will load SAVED Atari Basic files. Turbo programs will load into Atari Basic if none of the new commands are used.

Many of the new commands will be familiar to users of Basic XL and Basic XE. Turbo is not identical to either of those OSS products, however. Some of the new commands have the same syntax and others differ. Turbo has commands that the OSS Basics lack (CIRCLE and PAINT, for instance); OSS has some that Turbo doesn't (Player - Missile Graphics, for one).

Turbo pays no attention to LOMEM; you get the same amount of space no matter which Dos that you boot. It is, therefore, not compatible with the 850 RS-232 handler, loading the Basic program on top of it.

You can have 256 variables in your Turbo program, instead of only 128. Statement labels count as variables.

Since Turbo Basic uses the RAM under the OS ROM, it will not run on a 400 or 800 and will not run with any of the under-the-ROM or under-the-cartridge Dos systems.

There is a compiler for Turbo Basic and it is also public domain! The version currently available has all German prompts. An English translation will be available soon. (like now.... ed.) The compiler will handle most Basic programs. None of the immediate commands (LOAD, SAVE, etc.) will compile, nor will FOR loops with more than one NEXT statement. The compiled code is larger than the Basic source, so some large Basic programs can't be compiled.

Turbo Basic XL is an outstanding public domain program which offers many of the best features of other extended Basics plus a few of its own. It is fully compatible with Atari Basic and very fast. The price is right, too. I recommend it to all XL and XE owners.

Performance

I tried some simple benchmark programs on various Basics in order to compare their speeds. Turbo Basic is a very fast Basic interpreter; it turned in times comparable to Basic XE. The compiled programs are even faster.

The Basics tested were Turbo Basic XL version 1.5, Basic XE version 4.1 with extensions 4.11, and Atari Basic version B.

Three times are reported for Basic XE. The FAST time is with the statement 0 FAST added to each program. The SLOW time is without that extra statement. Bare times were run without loading the Extensions file. (Basic XL in SLOW mode will be about the same speed as the BARE times for Basic XE. FAST mode times will be slower than the Basic XE FAST times. Basic XL with a FASTCHIP installed will be about as fast as Basic XE.)

continued on next page

Turbo Performance Tests

TEST --	1	2	3	4	5
Turbo Basic XL	56	42	58	59	44
Turbo Compiler	54	27	13	13	21
Basic XE FAST	62	57	41	44	43
Basic XE slow	62	62	51	5790	64
Basic XE bare	237	71	98	5820	84
Atari Basic	237	110	163	6060	105

Test 1: Savage 500

This benchmark is a version of the Savage floating-point test. It was scaled down to 500 iterations (from 2500) in order to stay within my patience limits. Times on this code are determined almost totally by the speed of the floating point code. Note the nearly identical times turned in by BasicXE (without extensions) and Atari Basic.

Test 2: FOR loop

This one is very simple; a FOR loop that goes around 50,000 times

```
FOR I= 1 to 50000 : NEXT I
```

Test 3: GOTO loop

This uses a different sort of loop; a GOTO statement in an IF. This loop goes around 20,000 times.

```
10000 I = 0
```

```
10010 I = I + 1 : IF I < 200000 THEN 10010
```

Test 4: GOTO loop - part 2

This is the same as test3, except that there are 5000 REM statements added to the beginning of the program. The long times in the table were produced by looping 200 times and multiplying the run time by 100. This test shows the time spent searching for the line to branch to. The results suggest that Turbo pre-processes line numbers in a manner similar to FAST mode in the OSS Basics.

Test 5: DISASM.BAS

I ran the program DISASM.BAS, a public domain disassembler. I disassembled the locations \$0711 - \$087f to the screen.

Things to do with your Atari

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness....

Why?

Hey! Have you noticed that the weather is just beautiful outside? You can't spend all Spring and Summer in your Computer Room (you don't have your computer in the kitchen, do you?). You HAVE to pile the family into the car and explore something other than the Colossal Cave! Now, driving around the country is not a high priority item for a hard core hacker like you, so may I make a suggestion? Since you are going to be out, take the clan to one of the out-of-the-way places that I have found to be worth visiting, Herb's Discount Software in Fremont.

Who?

I started shopping at Herb's during one of those computer swap meets. His booth had a reasonable selection of Atari 8-bit software, something that is getting to be a rarity these days. It was only after buying from him that I connected his outlet with those catchy ads in *MicroTimes* and *Computer Currents*. His advertisement reads "14 Ways to Beat the Competition" and goes on to list such money saving gambits as "We pay ourselves less", "We clean our own stores" and "We married gals with cheap tastes"! More to the point, these guys buy excess stock from distributors for pennies on the dollar and represent a prime source of limited numbers of Atari 8-bit titles. Everything in stock is not a fabulous bargain, nor is everything super cheap - but there are some jewels in there that you don't see much anymore and would make great additions to anyone's library who missed them the first time around.

What?

The first thing you will notice at the entrance to the store is the stack of Atari Programmer Kits in the aisle. Priced at \$9.50, they contain a Basic (rev A) cartridge, the Basic Reference Manual and a Basic self-study book. For those of us who own an 800XL with the revision B Basic and no Basic documentation, this is not such a bad offer. Pick one up and get out from under that buggy ROM in your XL.

Starting with the expensive stuff, the top of the heap is Sargon III, a premier chess program for those in that frame of mind. Bring about \$25 for this item, a little high compared to most of his stock. (Electronic One has it for \$23... are you paying attention, Herb?).

A group of items at \$20: Power Pad (great piece of hardware, but not compatible with anything else and little available for it - is programable), SAM (allows any Atari to talk! this version may not work on XL/XE - Electronic One has it for \$15....), and Net Worth (yawn....).

**"We drive little,
old cars..."**

Herb

Things get a little better at \$15: Power Pad software (BearJam, Programmers Kit [just the thing to REALLY use the Pad] and Logic Master), Home Accountant (reported to be worthwhile by some), Family Finances (Herb's price is \$12.50 - by Atari), and another \$12.50 item, MasterType (great typing game for kids).

Down at \$10 are more goodies: Word Flyer (from ChildWare via Electronic Arts, a good piece for a youngster), Donkey Kong (available thru Electronic One for \$9, less than that elsewhere, even...), Hard Hat Mack (worth \$5, not \$10, but good program), S.A.G.A. #2 (another \$5; good program), Q-Bert, Popeye and Frogger (all great at \$5, OK at \$10), Tonk in the Land of Buddy-Bots (more kiddie stuff, not bad), and Atari Computer Chess (not a dud, but not for \$10, either).

continued on next page

Herb's Place, cont'd

After one \$7.50 deal, Miner 2049er, we get to the heart of the values, the \$4 or 3 for \$10 bin: Asteroids, Space Invaders, Galaxian, and Defender are all great Atari classics. Shamus, Protector II, Drelbs, and Claim Jumper were worthwhile Synapse productions, while Squish'Em, Gorf, PlatterMania, Demon Attack, Space Eggs, and Picnic Paranoia may please some and not others.

Two of the best in this field are David's Midnite Magic and Serpentine, either of which are worth the trip. Last, and candidate for Best of the Bunch, is ChatterBee, a spelling drill that talks to you. It pronounces one of 100 words at random from one of the 25 different levels (2500 words total) and then uses it in a sentence. It keeps score and advances you to a higher level if you do well in your present one (and puts you in a lower group if you choke.....). Absolutely fantastic at \$4!!

At the bottom of the heap are all the tape offerings - \$2 each: Touch Typing (good typing practice), Jumpman, Picnic Paranoia, Aztec Challenge, Apple Panic, and Ricochet. For two bucks, don't expect too much and you may be pleasantly surprised.

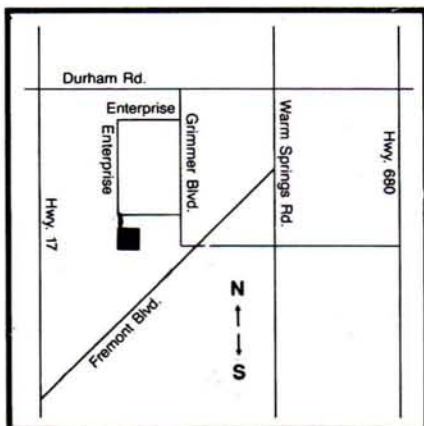
When?

I didn't get every item listed that may be available since new stuff is arriving all the time, so use this inventory as a guide, not a shopping list. I make the trip every chance I get and seldom come home with nothing (sometimes, maybe I should.....). Considering the current trend towards reduced 8-bit availability in retail stores, Herb really has something down there in Fremont. Run on down and check him out! Now!

Where?

FREMONT

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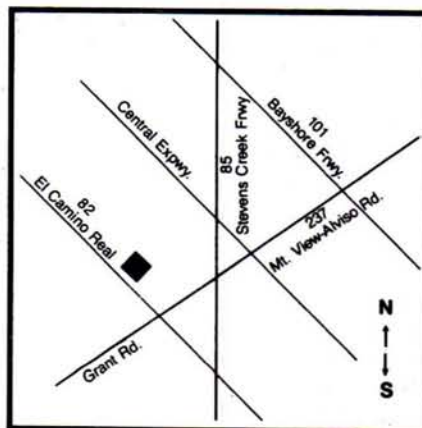


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Random Ramblings

Mostly About Publishing Partner

by Jim Hood

Ralph Cavagnuolo and I seem to have become the default SLCC Desktop Publishing SIG by virtue of our obsessions with *Publishing Partner* and *Fleet Street*. If you are tired of reading about the same old programs issue after issue, let your editors know and they will start dumping us. Especially if you give them articles to replace ours.

In case I haven't told you this six times already, *Publishing Partner* and *Easy Draw* are my two favorite and most used programs. I think *Publishing Partner* excels in the handling of text and *Easy Draw* 2.0 excels in drawing manipulation.

These two programs have allowed me to transfer a great deal of my work from the "drawing board" to the computer and I like that. If I could now add a cheap (\$3,000 to \$6,000) camera recorder to my ST and utilize it with *Publishing Partner* and *Easy Draw* to directly produce hi-res (2,000 to 8,000 pixels per line), full color slides I would be happy as Gary Hart at a San Francisco Hookers' Ball.

Incidentally, if you're like me and occasionally forget how nice it is to own an Atari, I recently got some information on a camera recorder that offers an extra 512K of memory as one option. That memory costs \$1000.00. Compare that to buying a full 520ST console at the current summer sale price of \$200.00 plus the cost of the qualifying disk drive. Compare it also to the cost of 512K upgrades for the 520ST.

Being an avid Atariian, I

naturally have some Atari stock; so I naturally went to the first Atari Corp. annual meeting on May 21. I believe I heard Sam Tramiel say that the Megs were "on the boat." From past experience, I think that means they are producing a few units and will be shipping them as soon as they have enough to fill an order. I also understood him to say that the initial shipment would go to Europe, which jibes with earlier products that were marketed in Europe while final FCC approvals and so forth were finished up for the domestic market. He also said he anticipates the laser printers coming along around the end of July.

There were demo units of most of the computers and the laser printer at the meeting. The fonts looked better than those used on Atari's proxy statement. Leonard Tramiel said that the fonts used in the proxy statement were actually designed for dot matrix use whereas the ones shown at the annual meeting had been tweaked for best appearance on the laser.

Atari reported first quarter '87 net sales of \$65,133,000 compared to \$44,877,000 for first quarter '86. Net incomes were respectively \$15,258,000 and \$2,682,000.

After the meeting, while I was standing around trying to figure out how to slip a Mega machine under my coat, I got talking with a fellow NEC P6 owner about the comparative virtues of the 360 dots per inch (dpi) and 180 dpi printer drivers for *Publishing Partner*.

His position is that 180 dpi gives a solid black and 360 dpi is overkill that takes four times as long to print and tends to give a smeared printout.

My position is that the extra dots at 360 dpi help fill in jaggies on diagonal and curved lines and give a better definition to text.

Depending on how we rank our priorities, we both are right, of course, and we both agree that the amount of use a ribbon has had makes a big difference.

For example, this article was printed on a NEC P6 at 360 dpi with an old ribbon. The main body text is 10 point Helvthin, which is one of three variations of *Publishing Partner's* Helvetica font that I recently edited and put into the public domain.

I can go as small as 8 points, or less, with this font and an old ribbon and produce readable material (which is what you have here if our offset printer did another bangup job this issue). At 180 dpi and/or with a new ribbon the results would appear marginally inferior to me.

If the printing of graphics which make use of the standard GEM patterns has the highest priority, a whole different approach might be preferred. I did seven test printings of the GEM patterns on either a NEC P6 or a Citizen 120D using *Publishing Partner* and *Easy Draw*.

A total of five different printer drivers resulted in five different sizes for the GEM patterns. (As an aside, *Publishing Partner* shows its patterns #38 and 39 as parallel, diagonal lines on the screen but prints them as circles and cross hatches.) I have cut and pasted the "diagonal brick" pattern from each of the five printouts into Figure 1 to give you an indication of the variation in sizes.

The 360 dpi patterns are so small as to be virtually indistinguishable and about a dozen of the patterns appear practically solid black. If these patterns are important, *Easy Draw*

(Continued on next page)

(Rambling, Continued)

might be the program of choice. Or a Degas picture imported into Publishing Partner might work.

Let's Argue

Ralph Cavagnuolo concluded in his May *Fleet Street* review that "If...you are doing serious work and need the most power buy Fleet Street" rather than *Publishing Partner*. I really haven't used Fleet Street, but my cursory opinion is that while it is set up in a manner more familiar to professional typesetters, such as Ralph, and does have some powerful features, such as automatic hyphenation, it is not presently suitable for serious work due to its lack of high quality printer fonts.

As far as I can tell, *Fleet Street* is dumping screen fonts to the printer and even with a 640x400 screen that is not high resolution printed output.

Publishing Partner, like *Easy Draw and Graphic Artist* configures its page to the output device. This allows much higher resolution printing on almost any dot matrix printer.

In addition, having a PostScript

driver in *Publishing Partner* means that the output can be printed at 300 dpi on PostScript compatible laser printers, which have very high quality font designs, and on devices such as the Mergenthaler Linotronics 300 which can print up to 2540 dpi. Now that is serious work!

If, as Ralph reported, *Fleet Street* does get drivers for the HP Laserjet Plus and the entire Mergenthaler line, then it will be a very serious contender. Spectrum HoloByte is also working on a NEC P6 driver. If it gives better than screen resolution, that could be a winner also.

Edit Your Own

Ralph also noted that there is no cents sign in the standard *Publishing Partner* font sets. I don't know if PostScript has a cents sign stuck in their font sets, but if you are using a dot matrix printer, you can design your own.

• See.

There are also some undocumented international characters lurking in the fonts. Hit **ESC** then a number key and see what prints (but doesn't show on the screen). Admittedly not very

useful at present, but being worked on.

Designing your own fonts is possible because SoftLogik has released their font editors into the public domain. I consider this the greatest thing they have done since sending out the free 1.01 upgrades.

The Font Factory is working on several additional dot matrix fonts which SoftLogik is planning to distribute. The samples which were put on CompuServe looked very good.

Font Editing Pointers

- SoftLogik released an editor for screen fonts, *CED.PRQ*, and a separate editor for dot matrix printer fonts, *PFont.PRQ*. See Figures 2 and 3.

- You need a monochrome monitor to use the editors.

- Try editing an existing font set before you try creating one from scratch.

Screen Font Editor

- Choose from the drop down menus whether to edit a color or monochrome screen font set.

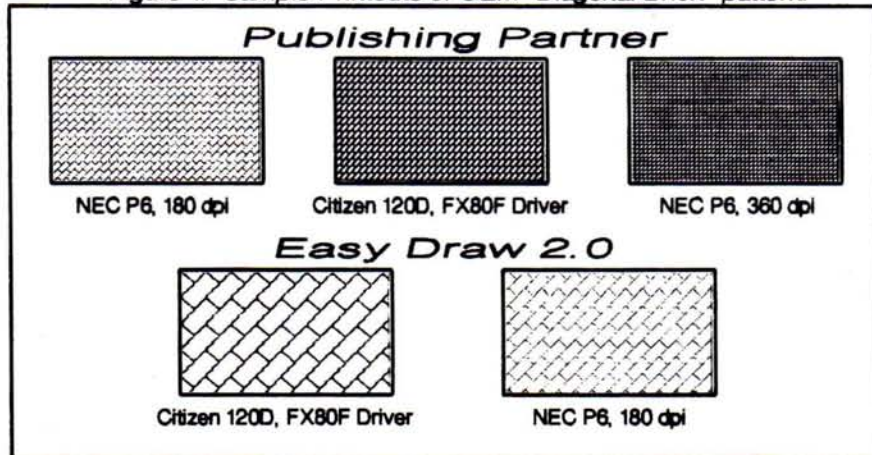
- Editing in *CED.PRQ* is similar to many bit map font editors. Choose a character by clicking on it in the character set matrix at the bottom of the screen. To set a bit, click on a clear grid space. To clear a bit, click on a black grid space.

- Both screen and printer character spacings are controlled by the screen editor.

Click on the two horizontal arrows near the center of the editor screen to change the amount of

(Continued on next page)

Figure 1. Sample Printouts of GEM "Diagonal Brick" pattern.



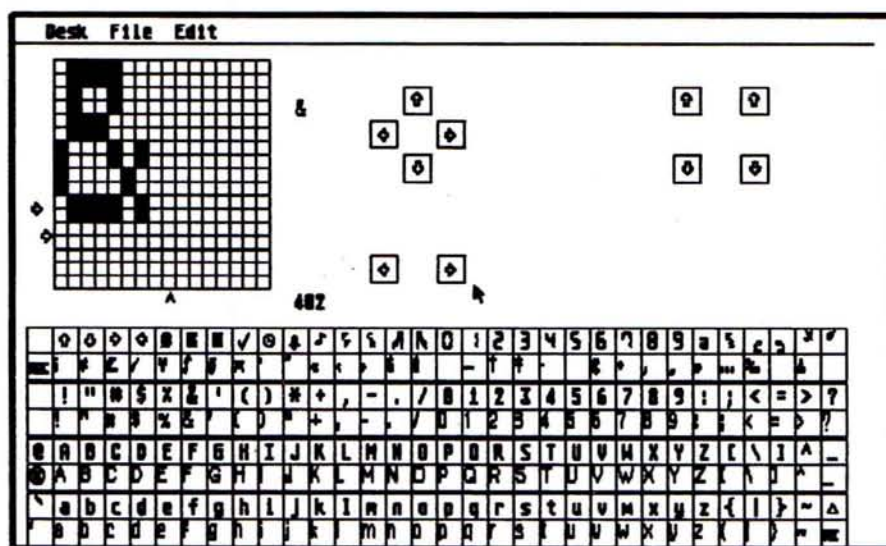


Figure 2. The CED.PRGR Screen Font Editor.

(Still Rambling)

horizontal space allocated to a character. The result is indicated by the number to the left of the arrows and by the position of the pointer under the font design grid.

- Rough positioning changes can be made to the screen fonts by clicking on the set of four arrows above the width arrows. Generally having the character start at the left edge seems as good as anything.
- When you've finished editing the screen font, drop down the Edit menu and assign a new name to the font along with a unique font identification number.
- Drop down the File menu to save the font to disk. Use the same name you used in the edit menu and add the extender "FNT."
- There are four arrows on the right of the editor screen that will change the character baseline and descender positions. The changes are indicated by the position of the two arrows to the left of the editor grid. Generally, I don't mess with these.

Printer Font Editor

• In the printer font editor, *PFONT.PRGR*, you get to the character you want to edit, after loading in a font set, by pressing either the **■** or **■** key. The Atari screen character having the same ASCII value as the character to be edited is shown in the upper right corner of the editor screen. The character being edited is on the left side of the screen. See Figure 3.

• The printer characters are made up of straight and curved line segments. To move from one segment to the next on a character, press either **K** or **J**. The segment that you are on is indicated by 1, 2 or 4 small boxes.

One box indicates that you are at either the start of the initial or the end of the final segment in a continuous set of segments. A character may have more than one set of segments. For example, the ampersand character in Figure 3 is made of three sets; one to define the outside and one each to define the inside top and bottom.

Two boxes indicate a straight line segment.

Four boxes indicate a curved segment.

- By pressing number 2 on the keyboard you can insert a straight line segment.
- Press the 3 key to insert a curved segment.
- To start a new character in an empty ASCII location, first press the 1 key then move the cursor to the location where you want to begin the character and click the left mouse button.
- To close a set of line segments, press 4.
- After completing a character outline, put a fill seed in each area bounded by line segments. Do this by pressing the 0 key and any number key, starting at 0, then clicking the left mouse button with the cursor positioned where you want the seed placed. Again referring to the ampersand character in Figure 3, a single fill seed inside the lines outlining any part of the stem will fill the

(Continued on next page)

(Still Rambling)

character. Fill seeds are removed from a character with an option in the Character drop down menu.

- After selecting a character and a line segment to change, click and hold on one of the small boxes and move it to a new position.
- You cannot move the boxes defining a closed path. Press **Q** to go back one segment and move the equivalent box there.
- Pressing **D** will delete the currently selected line segment.
- Frequently save your work, because you will surely mess up along the way.
- A grid taped to the screen helps position line segments. A ruler is also useful.
- The two vertical lines to the left and right of a character define its horizontal cutoff points. If you extend part of a character beyond these lines, it will be clipped. The left line also indicates where measurement of the character width begins. The actual width is

set in the screen font editor (see above) so the right line is there more as a guide, but it will clip segments that go past it.

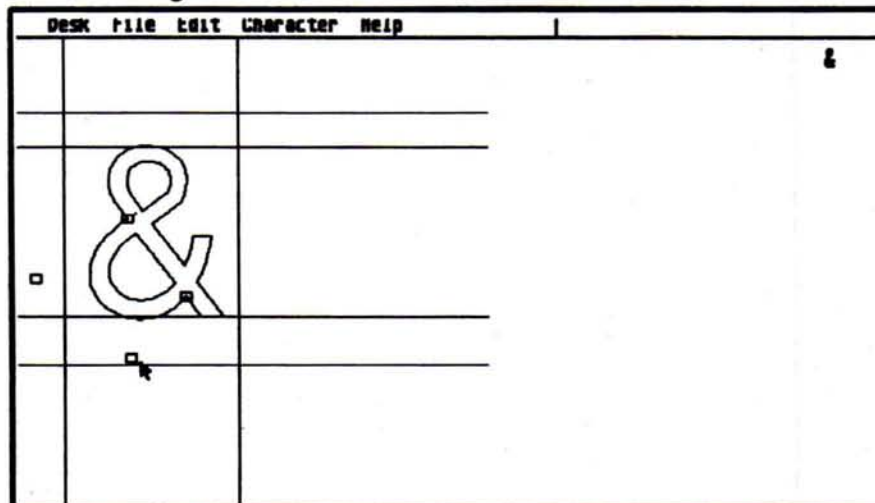
- The two vertical lines can be moved by clicking on them very near the top and dragging them. If you move the left line for one character, you move it for every character. The right line is independently set for each character.
- The distance from the left line to the character will affect the position of the printed character. Adjusting a character's distance from the left line is therefore very important to the look and balance of the printed output.
- To save the font set, use the Save option from the File drop down menu. Give the set the same name as the screen fonts, except use PFT for the extender. No font ID number is required.
- Each font set is actually composed of two character sets. One is for small font sizes, the other for large. This allows the smaller sizes to be designed thinner, which generally helps their

clarity. However, either set can be designed as outlined, filled characters or as single line characters.

- The point size at which a font set changes from the "thick" to the "thin" characters can be set with an option in the Character drop down menu. There is also an option for setting the smallest point size that will be printed bold.
 - The algorithm for making a dot matrix character bold sometimes results in a loss of edge smoothness and a rounding of some corners.
- If you like bold characters and use them a lot, you might consider a whole separate font set for them.
- Before you get carried away redesigning your characters, consider whether you will want to use a particular font with a PostScript output device. If so, make sure you have the same thing as PostScript in each equivalent ASCII position.

That should be enough to get you started. Bye.

Figure 3. The PFont.PRg Printer Font Editor.



Say, James, could you write a little about the Disk Library.....?

I'm Not Going To Take It Anymore!

I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore! As the 8-bit disk librarian for the club the one statement that makes me see red is "There is no new software for the 8-bits". While I will admit there is not as much commercial software available as there once was, the quality of the public domain software has by far surpassed the quality of most of the commercial programs we paid 30 or 40 dollars for in years gone by. Hopefully, this article will help convince you to plug your trusty 8-bit back in, blow the dust off and get back to enjoying your computer.

In this article I will highlight some of the better programs and special disks that the club has in its library.

Those of you who have PRINTSHOP are probably aware that we have 2 disks of graphics to add to your collection that came with PRINTSHOP. What you might not know is that there is a program that will print these graphics to your printer in miniature size. That way, you will not have to guess what a particular graphic looks like, you will be able to look at it before you print it. The program prints 11 rows of 7 graphics to a page. This sure beats printing out all of the graphics manually, then pasting them onto a page like we have done in the past. This program is available on the April, 1986 disk of the month (DOM).

Also available for PRINTSHOP is Iconflip which will allow you to do most anything to a graphic or customize it for your own use, such as adding text to the graphic using any font you wish by simply loading it from disk. You can also make mirror images for printing iron on T-shirt decals for that custom look. It is available on the May, 1987 DOM. There is a new PRINTSHOP graphics disk in the works and should appear in July or August.

If you are looking for a database to get yourself organized then you might try Home Inventory, which will allow you to keep track of serial numbers, cost of an item and date of purchase. This program is available on the September, 1986 DOM. Then there is DATABASE from ANALOG magazine. This program is very much like SYNFILE+. You can configure it to keep track of almost anything you wish and can create from 1 to 8 fields up to 30 characters long each. This program also has full sorting and printing capabilities and is available on

the November, 1986 disk. Another good database is VIDTAPE, which is a custom database written just for keeping track of your VCR tapes. With this program you can keep track of the titles of your movies, which tape they are on and where it is on the tape. It is available on the January, 1987 disk.

Another good program is the checkbook program from the February, 1987 DOM. It will allow you to keep track of your finances without those embarrassing mistakes that always happen at the wrong time.

Last, but certainly not least, is the SLCC disk library database. This database contains every program from every disk we have in our library and a short description of each program. You can also use this database to organize your own disk library. Due to the large number of programs in our library, this database takes both sides of the disk. In our never ending effort to keep our members informed, we update this disk every month just before the main meeting.

In the games department (oh no, not more games), one of the most popular games for the ST right now is Wheel of Fortune. Well, once again the ST falls short of the 8-bit. The ST version does not include a bonus round or the ability to create your own puzzles. Wheel of Fortune on the 8-bit has both of these options and the ability to store up to 3500 puzzles on one disk. This version truly does include everything except Vanna White! The only draw back to this program is that it only works on the XL or XE computers, as it is written in TURBO BASIC XL. You will find this program on the front side of the May, 1987 disk of the month.

While I am on the subject of games, for the West Coast Computer Faire we released our first GAMES only disk. Side one of this disk uses the BASIC XL runtime package, which means that these programs are actually running under BASIC XL without using the cartridge. Some of the all time favorite games written in basic, such as Solitaire, Yahtzee, Battleship and Biker Dave, were good when run under Atari basic, they are now down right fun when used with BASIC XL. The back side of the

continued on next page

continued from previous page

disk includes many of the most popular binary games around, such as MIRAPEDE, which is a real good clone of the ever popular CENTIPEDE. Also included is ELEVATOR REPAIRMAN, DEATH ZONE and PLANETARY DEFENSE. The highlight of this disk is XAGON. This game looks something like QBERT, but has the best graphics of any public domain program or most commercially available programs. To give you an idea as to how good this game is, it was played for 4 straight days at the WCCF and there was always someone waiting in line for their chance to play. This program gets my vote for the best PD game of the year, if not ever. It alone is well worth the price of the disk.

Have you ever wanted to copy just selected files from one disk to another. Well, now this task is much easier by using SHADOW, which is a file copying utility that lets you select just the files you want to copy. Another added bonus of this program is that if you only have one disk drive it will totally fill your computers memory before it asks you to insert the destination disk, which is a big time saver if you have a lot of files to copy.

Have you ever accidentally deleted a file from your disk? Now you can RESCUE your files from being lost forever by running RESCUE, a binary file that will read your disk, find all of the deleted programs and put them back into working order. Along with these two utilities, you will find many more useful utilities, along with some of the best documentation ever written for public domain software on our Utilities disk number 2 that was released in April, 1986.

Now, for this month, in addition to our regular disk of the month, we have, Daisy-Dot, a program that will revolutionize ATARI 8-bit dot-matrix printing. Daisy-Dot incorporates the greatest feature of dot-matrix printing, Near Letter Quality (NLQ), with the flexibility of software control. With up to 4 graphic densities, Daisy-Dot prints at up to 8 times the density of a printer's normal draft mode by use of a special technique found in many expensive printer hardware upgrades. Daisy-Dot makes two passes for each line, but instead of merely double-striking, the page is advanced slightly between passes and another set of formatted dots are printed. The result is a very high quality text, almost indistinguishable from that

of a professional typesetter or typewriter. Daisy-Dot requires standard text files without control characters for printing. This format is an option from most word processors. The number of high-resolution, PROPORTIONAL fonts that can be used by Daisy-Dot is unlimited. Five fonts are included, Roman, Sans-Serif, Script, Block and Ohio, and the Daisy-Dot Font Editor makes creating new fonts easy. Daisy-Dot will work with any XL or XE computer with at least 64K of memory, and any of these printers, Epson EX, FX, JX, LX, MX, RX and STAR GEMINI and STAR SG. Other Epson compatibles may or may not work, depending on how "COMPATIBLE" they are. Daisy-Dot is written in compiled Turbo Basic. Because of limitations of Turbo Basic, Daisy-Dot will not work with SpartaDos nor on ATARI 400/800 computers. I can't tell you how well this program works - it must be demonstrated, but in my opinion this is the best printer utility money can buy, commercial or not. The only way to prove my point is to show you, so come to the meeting and I will.

The back side of the disk will have a number of printer art pictures. What do I mean by printer art you ask? Well these are pictures that you can print out on any 80 column printer. You don't need a graphics printer or any special utilities. All you have to do is dump them to your printer from DOS. You will be amazed at how good these pictures look considering there are NO graphics characters in them.

Well that's about it for now as I am about out of space and time for this month. If time and space permit, next month I will bring you up to date on some of the other exceptional programs and special disks in our library.

As I am finishing this article I have been informed that ATARI will be at the next main meeting, so those of you who own 8-bit computers please show up and show them that we still want them to support our computers!

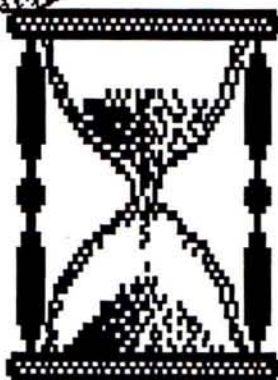
James Moran
8-Bit Disk Librarian

The Disk library is one of the club's greatest assets.... use it!! All disks are available at the General Meetings. Ed.

Minutes

FROM MAY MEETING

GENERAL MEETING MAY 5, 1987



Meeting called to order at 8:15 PM by president Barton. Roll call of officers, Barton, Sawley & Moran present. Hansen arrived late due to school class.

President Barton discussed the situation that has arisen with Atari, concerning this year's ATARI EXPO. In effect, Atari has taken the EXPO that had been promised to the local user groups as a fund raiser and is going to put on its own show. Three of the user groups that were involved last year have been asked to support the show, the other two groups have not even been contacted according to representatives at tonight's meeting. If we participate we would help sell tickets, advertise the EXPO and work the show. In return we might get part of the ticket sale proceeds.

The initial discussions that the club has been involved in indicate that this show will be set up to show the ST line with little or no showing of the 8 bit machines.

The President indicated that the officers and members who have been involved in these preliminary talks all feel that we should not support this show.

After considerable discussion the following motion was made by Telfer and seconded by many. MOTION: That as the situation now stands the SLCC not support the ATARI EXPO. This non-support should be an active one. If ATARI changes its position on 8 bit support and User group participation, the club Officers be empowered to change this position. Motion passed unanimously. The officers should notify the membership immediately of any changes. A letter to Jack Tramiel requesting a change in Atari's position will be sent as soon as possible.

President Barton called attention to the nice letter the club received from Children's Hospital thanking us for our donation of both hardware and software to the hospital's computer program.

Our software co-chairmen Cliff and Mark demonstrated this month's 8 bit floppy. There are several games on the disk this month and a good

utility. The games are Wheel of Fortune, Midas, Tic tac and Wargame. The utility is TCD which will help decide whether a program has been shrunk, mashed, etc. or whether it is basic, objective or a picture file.

Nominations for club office were held and the following members accepted nomination. For President: Bob Barton For Vice: President: Mike Sawley For Secretary: Jim Moran For Treasurer: Lois Hansen. The President advised that further nominations would be taken prior to the election which will be held during the June general meeting. The newsletter editors would like some software reviews for the Journal. Anyone purchasing new software and willing to write a short review should contact either of the editors.

Treasurer, Lois Hansen, reported that she is attending some special school classes which have caused her to miss meetings. The classes will end next month. She asked all members to check the label on their newsletters and if they find it highlighted it is time to renew their membership. Lois said 3E Software is currently selling off all their 8 bit software and some good buys can be had.

Program Chairman, Dick Scott, introduced Guy Chocoranour, Basic SIG leader. Guy explained a little bit about the purpose of the Basic SIG and how it could be useful to anyone interested in making or modifying a basic program. The basic SIG will usually be in the third week of the month and will meet in Hayward. Guy will try and help by phone if you get stuck and need help between regular SIG meetings. Guy next demonstrated a program that he had modified to keep track of his extensive wine collection (4 bottles of Gallo hearty burgandy and 3 bottles of cheap stuff).

David Foster demonstrated a CAD program that he has written in Pascal and is submitting for the club's programming contest.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10PM.

Respectfully Submitted Jim Moran-Secretary

JUNE 1987

SLCC Calendar of Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 Main Meeting 8:00 San Leandro Public Library	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 M/L SIG 8 PM	10 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING	11	12	13
14	15 ST SIG 8PM SAN LEANDRO LIBRARY	16 COMMUNI- CATION SIG 8 PM	17	18 Beginner's SIG 7:30 Basic SIG 8:00	19 JOURNAL DEADLINE	20
21	22 ST SOFTWARE SIG 8 PM	23 Happy Birthday WOMEN PASCAL SIG 7 PM BUSINESS SIG 8 PM	24 EDUCATION SIG 7 PM	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	Now That It's Plugged In.... The SLCC Beginners SIG is for those who own Atari 8-bit computers and consider themselves a novice or beginner. We discuss Basic, DOS, operations, system set-up, keyboard functions, and other introductory material. SIG meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM. Call Richard Stiehl at 352-3444 or 562-7485 for information and directions. See you there..... RS		



ROBERT M. WOOLLEY
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SIG (special interest group) leaders and their phone numbers are located on page three at the front of the Journal. Please call them for details or directions.

June Meeting

SANDI AUSTIN user group coordinator from ATARI will be the guest speaker at our June second meeting. Now that the SLCC and ATARI have ironed out the problems concerning this year's ATARI EXPO, Sandi will be giving us the latest information on the show, which is scheduled for June 19 and 20, and the equipment that will be shown. If possible Sandi will bring the new ATARI PC to this meeting for a demonstration.

At this meeting and at the ST SIG meeting on the eighth we will be trying something new-an auction. For the general meeting we have an eight bit ASTRA 2001 double disk drive to auction. This drive was recently donated to the club and we felt an auction would be the most interesting way to use this great gift. The 2001 is actually two double density drives

in one case and this particular one is in excellent condition. The minimum bid will be \$125 which is less than half its selling price. At the ST meeting on the eighth we will auction a MAGIC SAC from DATA PACIFIC. The minimum bid for this will be \$25. In addition, at the General meeting we will raffle an ATARI 1030 modem and two ATARI Proline joysticks.(as new)

Last but not least don't forget the annual Officer elections will be held during this meeting.

Dick Scott and Jim Moran

SLCC

JOURNAL



P.O. BOX 1506, SAN LEANDRO, CA 94577-0374

Next Meeting:

June 2, 1987 • 8 pm

San Leandro Community Library
300 Estudillo Ave

TO

FIRST CLASS MAIL